

{July 20, 2007} — Media, PA – This afternoon Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA), Vice-Chairman of the Small Business Committee and a member of the Armed Services Committee, toured the Container Research Corporation -- a privately held and veteran-owned small business in Delaware County. Founded in 1956, the Container Research Corporation has been a leading manufacturer of specialized steel, aluminum and composite containers for shipment and long-term storage of a variety of military and commercial equipment.

Today's visit, in which he toured the facility and met with employees, is part of Congressman Sestak's ongoing efforts to meet with businesses in the 7th District to learn of their issues and concern. Since he has been in Congress, Congressman Sestak has taken steps to benefit companies like Container Research Corporation by creating defense contracting opportunities for small businesses. Specifically, he passed an amendment to the Defense Authorization bill that mandated defense contract officers must certify that they have done market research, including by using a web browser, to see if small businesses qualify for any contract over \$1 million. This amendment will not only improve our defense contracting system to improve cost efficiency but it will also benefit small businesses. And he passed an amendment requiring that, when possible, large contracts are unbundled to open the bidding process to small businesses. Over the past five years, the federal government has increased the use of a practice known as "contract bundling," which allows federal agencies to consolidate purchases into mega-contracts — contracts so large they cannot possibly be performed by a small company. As a result, significantly fewer small businesses are receiving federal government contracts. Congressman Sestak's amendment will ensure that more large contracts will be reviewed as to their appropriateness to be bundled, and potentially broken into smaller pieces more suitable for small business. This is important because 23 percent of all federal contracts are to be given to small businesses, but currently only 6.5 percent them are given to small businesses in the Seventh District.

"Small businesses currently make up 97 percent of all exporters and there is great untapped potential for small businesses to continue to grow their exports overseas. Additionally, I believe it is critically important to expand trade adjustment assistance to firms that are adversely affected by globalization," said Congressman Sestak.

Yesterday, Congressman Sestak also unanimously passed his Small Business trade bill through the House Small Business Committee. The SBA Trade Programs Act of 2007 will strengthen and expand small business exporter access into foreign markets and protect and assist small businesses affected by the global market through enhancing Trade Adjustment Assistance programs.

Congressman Sestak has also hosted two Economic Summits since assuming office to help businesses connect to key local, state, and federal resources. The goal was to help businesses grow, as well as bring business, government, and academic leaders together to foster dialogue and discussion about strategies to increase economic development opportunities. The next one, the District's first Women's Summit, will address challenges facing women small business owners and issues affecting women in the workplace on Monday, July 23 at Bryn Mawr College from 10:00AM until 2:00PM. During the Women's Summit, House Small Business Committee Chairwoman Nydia Velazquez will be presiding over an official Committee Field Hearing on "Challenges Facing Women Small Business Owners." The hearing will be followed by two one-hour panels on issues facing women in the workplace and "success strategies."

In addition, while serving as the Vice Chairman of the House Small Business Committee, Representative Sestak has played a key role in the reauthorization of highly successful Small Business Association (SBA) programs. This has included introducing the SBA Entrepreneurial Development Programs Act of 2007, which reauthorized the popular Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program and Service Corps for Retired Executives (SCORE). Joe has been a strong proponent of STEM education and strengthening workforce development programs to help meet area businesses meet their employment needs.

"American small businesses bring innovation, creativity, competition and lower costs to the federal table. When these businesses are excluded from federal opportunities through contract bundling, our agencies, small businesses, and the taxpayers lose," added Congressman Sestak. "Fairer access for small businesses will lead to lower prices and the improvement of the quality of goods and services procured by the federal government, bringing greater returns for taxpayer dollars."

Congressman Sestak has a strong commitment to creating jobs and helping small business. As Vice Chairman of the Small Business Committee, Rep. Sestak has worked to support new and small businesses through open access to loans, credit and capital, advocates fair and true tax relief for small business, and work to reduce onerous regulations and paperwork. Congressman Sestak cosponsored the Family Small Business Tax Fairness Act to streamline small business joint-tax filings. He also voted in favor of Small Business Tax Relief Act--a bipartisan bill with \$1.3 billion in tax cuts to help small businesses invest in new equipment and hire new workers.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for*

*31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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